

IAQA 11TH ANNUAL MEETING & EXPOSITION

June 12-14, 2008 • Tampa Convention Center • Tampa, Florida

“The Great Sampling Debate”

An Introduction: What’s all the fuss about?

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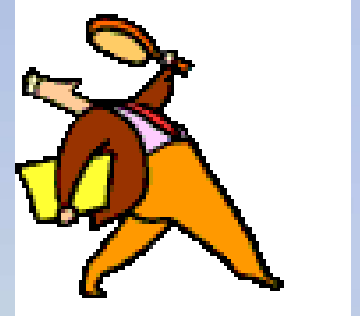
More than 17 years ago.....

- TCT industrial hygienists: “This is how you collect samples, you dopey engineer.”
- More is better than fewer (this is still true)
- **For air**, 6-stage Andersen was the de facto standard (remains “The World’s Reference Bioaerosol Sampler”)
- Filter cassettes were also used, but.....
- Bulks, tape lifts, swabs, wipes, Rodac™ plates were common



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Over the past several years.....

No need to sample if mold is visible

WHY THIS FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT?

- Don't need to know what kind of mold it is
- Doesn't inform discussion of health effects
- **Doesn't change the way we clean it up**
- **Save the money and put it toward the cleanup costs!**



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Over the past several years.....

- All “cognizant authorities” embraced this apparently enlightened point of view
- **Sampling is a waste of precious, limited financial resources**
- The industrial hyenas were wrong



...or were they?



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Still applicable today.....

- Meaningful interpretation of air sampling lab results is a non-trivial exercise
- **NOT the same** as air sampling for radon, lead or asbestos
- **Culturable AND spore trap?** What a concept! (see *Fishing for Mold*)





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Still applicable today.....

- Bulk material, surface sampling can yield **important clues** to nature/source of water
- Air sampling can reveal the presence of **hidden mold**, esp. in HVAC systems
(NYCDOH, U.S. EPA, ACGIH, AIHA, Health Canada, CCA)
- **Must have species ID** for drawing appropriate conclusions (NYCDOH, ACGIH, AIHA, Health Canada)

CAUTION

**THIS SIGN HAS
SHARP EDGES**

DO NOT TOUCH THE EDGES OF THIS SIGN



ALSO, THE BRIDGE IS OUT AHEAD





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Still applicable today.....

- Air samples from the occupied space can yield good correlation (~75%) with reservoirs in wall cavities (JD Miller et al)
- Newer sampling and analytical methods hold promise to address the **drawbacks of temporal variation, specificity**
- Tread carefully with PCR





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A compelling reason to sample.....

- The unscrupulous among us have taken advantage of this fundamental shift
- A **single sample** (tape lift or other) can differentiate between mold and 'not mold'





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Please hold questions for panel discussion

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